

REMARKS

The Office Action dated February 19, 2008 has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments and the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response thereto. Claims 1 and 4-7 are pending. By this Amendment, Claims 1 and 4 are amended, Claims 2-3 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new Claims 5-7 have been added. Support for the amendments to the claims may be found at least on page 5, lines 26-27, page 7, lines 1-3, page 7, line 29, to page 8, line 3, and in Figs. 5A, 5B and 6 of the application as originally filed. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is presented herein.

Claim Rejection -- 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,456,282 to Rumpel. To the extent that the rejections remain applicable to the claims currently pending, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for at least the following reason(s).

Claim 1 recites a vehicular suspension system including, among other features, a coil spring with a lower end supported on a suspension arm and an upper end supported on a vehicle body, wherein the lower end of the coil spring is lower than a support part where the suspension arm is supported on the vehicle body when no load other than the vehicle body weight is applied to the coil spring.

Rumpel discloses an independent rear wheel suspension system with a control arm 22 having an integrally formed spring seat 30 which seats a coil spring 31 interposed between the arm 22 and the vehicle chassis 10. The rear arm 22 has a bushing 35 at an inboard end 36 which pivotably connects the arm 22 to the chassis 10.

Applicants respectfully submit that Rumpel fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature recited by Claim 1. Rather, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 of Rumpel, the lower end of the coil spring 31 on the suspension arm 22 is not lower than the support part 36 where the suspension arm 22 is connected to the chassis 10. Moreover, Rumpel teaches that the control arms are substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of the motor vehicle (see Col. 1, ll. 64-64). Accordingly, because the spring seat 30 is integrally formed with the substantially transverse arm 22, the only time that the lower part of the spring 31 could be lower than where the transverse arm 22 connects to the chassis 10 would be during rebound movement (see Col. 3, ll. 53-56). Therefore, Rumpel does not disclose or suggest a coil spring with a lower end supported on a suspension arm and an upper end supported on a vehicle body, wherein the lower end of the coil spring is lower than a support part where the suspension arm is supported on the vehicle body *when no load other than the vehicle body weight* is applied to the coil spring, as recited by Claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that Rumpel also fails to disclose or suggest a vehicular suspension system, including, among other features, a coil spring wherein the coil spring has a middle body section that is curved along an axis between the centers of the lower spring seat and upper spring seat when no load other than the vehicle body weight is applied to the coil spring, as recited by new Claim 5. Rather, Figures 1 and 3 in Rumpel clearly show that the middle body section of spring 31 is not curved along an axis between the centers of the lower spring seat 30 and the point where the end 74 of the coil spring 31 is seated against the chassis 10. Rumpel simply discloses a coil spring 31 interposed between the seat 30 and chassis 10 (see Col. 2, ll. 59-60) and does

not suggest the coil spring have a middle body section that is curved along an axis between the centers of the lower spring seat and upper spring seat when no load other than the vehicle body weight is applied to the coil spring, as recited by Claim 5.

For at least the reason(s) provided above, Applicants submit that Rumpel does not disclose or suggest each and every one of the features recited in Claims 1 and 5. Accordingly, Rumpel does not anticipate, nor render obvious, Claims 1 and 5. Therefore, Applicants submit that Claims 1 and 5 are allowable over Rumpel.

Claims 6-7 depend from Claim 5. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims be deemed allowable for at least the same reason(s) that Claim 5 is allowable, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejection -- 35 U.S.C. 103

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rumpel in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,702,122 to Satou et al. Applicants note that a PTO-892 Notice of References Cited was not included with the current Office Action citing U.S. Patent No. 5,702,122 to Satou et al. as a newly cited reference. Applicants respectfully request that any subsequent Office Action include the Notice of References Cited listing Satou to ensure any patent issued will include the Satou reference. To the extent that the rejections remain applicable to the claims currently pending, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for at least the following reason(s).

Claim 4 recites a vehicular suspension system including, among other features, a shock absorber, wherein a lower end of the shock absorber is disposed coaxially with a coil spring and is connected to the knuckle forward of an axle of the rear wheel.

Rumpel is discussed above. Rumpel also discloses a shock absorber 26, but Figures 1 and 3 clearly show that the shock absorber 26 is not disposed coaxially with the coil spring 31. Furthermore, Rumpel teaches that the shock absorber 26 is connected between the wheel support member 28 and chassis 10, while the spring seat is interposed between the transverse arm 22 and chassis 10. Coaxially disposing the shock absorber 26 with the spring 31 would only result in either the shock absorber 26 seated on the transverse arm 22 or the spring 31 connected to the wheel support member 28. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to modify Rumpel to include a shock absorber, wherein a lower end of the shock absorber is disposed coaxially with a coil spring and connected to the knuckle forward of an axle of the rear wheel, as recited by Claim 4.

Satou fails to cure the deficiencies of Rumpel. Satou discloses an axle supported member 3 for a rear wheel that is supported to a suspension member 1 by an upper link 4 and a side rod 7. A forward lower link member 5 seats separately a suspension spring 8 and shock absorber 9. As can be seen clearly in Figure 1, Satou also does not teach or suggest a shock absorber, wherein a lower end of the shock absorber is disposed coaxially with a coil spring and connected to the knuckle forward of an axle of the rear wheel, as recited by Claim 4.

For at least the reason(s) stated above, the Applicants respectfully submit that Rumpel and Satou, alone or by any combination, do not teach or suggest each and every one of the elements recited by Claim 4. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would not find it obvious to modify Rumpel and Satou,

alone or by any combination, to arrive at the features recited by Claim 4. Accordingly, Claim 4 is allowable over Rumpel and Satou.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

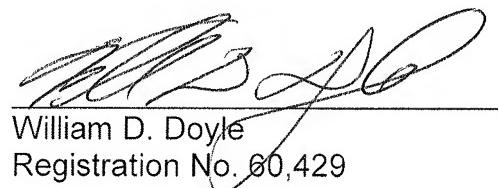
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, allowance of Claims 1 and 4-7, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **referencing attorney docket number 107348-00493.**

Respectfully submitted,



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